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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this handbook is to explain the St. Jude Basic Education (ABE) Program in Montgomery, Alabama by posing and answering a number of questions on the program. The answers provide information on: the purpose and goal of a tutorial program; the St. Jude ABE program; the type of student who comes to St. Jude; transportation; the high school equivalency examination (GED) and the qualifications for obtaining a GED certificate; program staff; how the program is organized; student progress at St. Jude; the type of class schedule a typical student has; why tutors are needed in the program; student discipline problems; how the volunteer tutors are organized; and the future of the St. Jude Program. (PT)

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INFORMATION

FOR THE

VOLUNTEER TUTOR

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INFORMATION FOR THE VOLUNTEER TUTOR

PREFACE

Thank you for expressing an interest in the St. Jude Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. You have a great deal to contribute to this program and may derive a great deal of satisfaction from your tutoring experiences. The purpose of this handbook is to explain the St. Jude ABE program and answer a number of questions that you may have.

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WHY HAVE A VOLUNTEER TUTORING PROGRAM?

It's simple. There are talented people with time available and a willingness to tutor, and there are willing students who wish to learn. Every person is a member of a community and has certain responsibilities within this community. As in all cities, there are limited funds to deal with the growing educational demands. A volunteer tutor, for example, can teach the basics of addition or substraction, prepare a student for the high school equivalence test, or renew a student's sense of hope. This type of volunteer tutoring program allows the members of this community to grow and progress together.

WHAT IS THE ST. JUDE ABE PROGRAM?

It is a program sponsored by the Montgomery Community Action Agency (CAA) and is designed to provide the community with a centralized ABE program. Community Action is one of the programs sponsored and funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C. The facilities at St. Jude's, located at 2048 West Fairview Avenue, are available to all of the residents of the Montgomery area. Previously the CAA had ABE schools in a number of its neighborhood service centers. The purpose of centralization is to consolidate resources and provide the students with an educational program that will better serve their needs.

WHAT TYPE OF STUDENT COMES TO ST. JUDE?

There are basically two types. One is the high school age student who has either dropped out or has been forced out of high school. The other is the middle aged adult who has not completed his high school education. A student may come to St. Jude for any number of reasons. He may wish to acquire new educational skills in English or mathematics, or he may wish to acquire the knowledge to pass the high school equivalency examination (GED). Whatever his motive, the student comes to learn. Some of these students coming to St. Jude have had unfortunate experiences in school, others simply were not able to finish. The St. Jude ABE program

is designed to accomodate both types of students.

HOW DO STUDENTS GET TO ST. JUDE?

A bus transportation system is provided by the CAA. Each student is given transportation to and from St. Jude.

WHAT IS THE GED AND WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR OBTAINING A GED CERTIFICATE?

The majority of the information below is quoted from a document entitled "State Certificate of High School Equivalency" which was prepared by the Department of Education, State of Alabama, State Office Building, Montgomery, Alabama.

STATE CERTIFICATE
OF
HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY

I. Not a High School Diploma: The State Certificate is not a high school diploma. In Alabama only a high school can grant a high school diploma. A high school may grant a diploma only upon the basis of the required number of credits earned in approved courses. Persons who can qualify for high school graduation are advised to do so.

II. Purpose: The State Certificate of High School Equivalency is designed to benefit veterans, service personnel and non-service adults who are 20 years of age or over. The colleges of the State recognize this Certificate for admission to their freshman classes. Some unfulfilled requirements may remain to be met after entrance to college. Some colleges require higher test scores than are required for the Certificate. The Certificate is accepted by branches of the Armed Forces, employers, training agencies, State and Federal Civil Service, in lieu of a high school diploma.

III. Basis for Granting State Certificate of High School Equivalency: 1. Applicants 20 years of age may take the General Educational Development Tests. Applicants 19 years of age who have been out of school at least one year may take the test.

Applicants 18 or 19 years of age who have justifiable family obligations may take the test if recommended by the superintendent or principal of the school last attended. However, the Certificate will not be issued to applicants until they reach the age of 20. The test will not be administered to a person under 18 years of age. The testing center at Auburn University will give a copy of the GED test scores to applicants who are 18 or 19 years of age and pass the GED test. The student may show this copy to prospective employers, Civil Service Agencies, etc., as evidence of passing this test.

2. The applicant must be a civilian resident of Alabama for one year immediately preceding date of application, or a former resident who attended school at least one school year in Alabama. A person who is a qualified voter in Alabama is eligible for the Certificate; however, a statement from the Board of Registrars must be submitted with the application.

3. The applicant must pass the General Educational Development Test with a standard score of not less than 35 on each part of the test, or with an average of not less than 45 on the battery of tests.

4. Retests are authorized on the entire battery of tests or on separate parts of the battery. The first retest will not be given until six months after the examinee has completed the entire battery unless there is evidence of intensive study for 6 weeks to 3 months. More time for preparation would be required for a person who made very low than one who failed by one or two points. A letter from a competent person stating that the testee has done intensive study should accompany the application for the retest. For retesting, use a form other than the one used for the initial test. A second retest will not be given until one year from the date of the first retest. The third retest will not be given until one year from the date of the second retest.

5. Application must be made on the prescribed Form E-7. This form is supplied only after receipt of the report of the GED test scores.

IV. Where Test is Given? For the students from St. Jude, the GED test is administered by Auburn University of Montgomery. The tests are given on Monday and Tuesday from 8:00 AM until 4:30 PM.

V. Costs of Tests: To pay rental on tests and for supervision, scoring and reporting the scores, the Auburn University test center charges $10.00 for the complete battery of five tests, and $2.50 for retest on each part.

VI. The Nature of the General Educational Development Test: It is a comprehensive objective examination, measuring competence in each of five aspects of educational development.

1. Test of Correctness and Effectiveness of Expression.
2. Test of Ability to Interpret Reading Materials in the Social Studies.
3. Test of Ability to Interpret Reading Materials in the Natural Sciences.
4. Test of Ability to Interpret Literary Materials.
5. Test of General Mathematical Ability.

WHO STAFFS THIS PROGRAM?

It is staffed by Mrs. Rose Loman, the overall coordinator, three ABE teachers, and tutors from the Montgomery community and Maxwell-Gunter AFB.

HOW IS THE PROGRAM ORGANIZED?

This ABE program is set up in three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced. The basic level is staffed by Miss Ophelia Holloway, the full time ABE teacher, along with volunteer tutors. Concentration in this level is on reading improvement, basic mathematics, and fundamental English. A student graduates from this level when he has acquired the skills necessary to read the program texts in the intermediate level.

Students in the intermediate level concentrate on building basic skills in mathematics, English, science, social studies and reading. Individualized programmed instruction is generally used. Mrs. Marie Tolbert, in coordination with the tutors, is responsible for the program at this level.

Teachers in the advanced level concentrate on preparing students for the GED. This level may also include guidance in the areas of advanced education and job opportunities. Mrs. Jessie Jacobs and volunteer tutors work at this level.

HOW DOES A STUDENT PROGRESS IN THE ST. JUDE ABE PROGRAM?

Upon enrolling in this program, the student is interviewed. The purpose of this interivew is to obtain basic information -- name, address, etc. The student is also asked to explain his goals in the ABE program and how long he expects to remain at St. Jude.

After the interview, each student is given a diagnostic test. The results of this test indicate the student's strengths and weaknesses in basic educational skills. Each student is then placed in one of the three ABE levels.

The majority of the students are placed in the intermediate level. The diagnosis-assignment system developed by the Rehabilitation Research Foundation at Draper Prison is applied here. The diagnostician analyzes the student's test results and prescribes a course of study. Each assignment prescribed is designed to alleviate an educational deficiency. The student advances at his own rate by completing these assignments. The benefit of this diagnostic system is that each student will be prescribed a course of study that will be suited to his needs.

WHAT TYPE OF CLASS SCHEDULE DOES THE TYPICAL STUDENT HAVE?

A typical student schedule might be.

	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday
6:30 - 7:20	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
7:30 - 8:20	English	English	English
8:30 - 9:20	General Science	Social Science	Literature

The student's schedule depends upon his diagnosis and his interests. A student in the intermediate level, for example, may study English for the entire week, or he may choose to vary his schedule. The reason for having the schedule listed above is to make the instructors available to the student. The diagnostician will prescribe a course of study and the student will be given the choice of how and when he wishes to complete his assignments.

WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR TUTORS IN THIS PROGRAM?

We know that a student is seeking something specific when he enrolls in the St. Jude ABE program. He either wishes to pass the GED or else to upgrade his skills in a number of areas. Whatever he tried before in his education was not totally successful, otherwise he would not be enrolling in this program. The tutor can offer this student individualized attention. He can offer understanding, support and the resources that the student needs to reach his goals. This one to one -- tutor to student relationship is most important.

WHAT PROBLEMS IS THE TUTOR LIKELY TO HAVE?

The greatest problem for most tutors is having too little patience. A tutor will usually expect his students to work hard and be constantly interested in what they are doing. This, of course, will not always be the case. Learning material that one has failed before, or has not studied for a long time, is difficult. Tutors must have the highest expectations from their students, but that expectation must be commensurate with the situation and abilities of the student. The important thing is that in the long run, these students can and will succeed. Each tutor can play an important role in this success.

DOES THE TUTOR HAVE STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS?

Generally not. These students come because they want to learn. However, each tutor must insure that no person disturbs his students' learning process. If a discipline problem should arise and appeals to reason fail, the tutor should contact Mrs. Loman or Mr. Pendarvis, the Vocational Education director.

HOW ARE THE VOLUNTEER TUTORS ORGANIZED?

The general coordinator is Ray Lewis. There is also an "informal bureaucracy" which is illustrated below.

General Coordinator

Coordinator for Pre and In-Service	Coordinator for tutor recruiting	Coordinator for student recruitment	Coordinator for research and development
Coordinator for publicity	Coordinator for admisistration-testing and placement	Coordinator for continuing education and job placement	

The coordinators in this "informal bureaucracy" are as follows.

Ray Lewis	(Ext. 293-) 2770	General coordinator
Bob Gregory	2174	Coordinator for pre and in-service training
Bill MacLeay	3278	Coordinator for publicity
Jim Rouse	5270	Coordinator for tutor recruitment
Jon Bowermaster	7795	Coordinator for administration, testing and placement
Ken Boyack	5485	Coordinator for research and development
Ernie Pryor	6011	Coordinator for student recruitment
Alan Cody	2321	Coordinator for continuing education and job placement

This type of structure is needed to maintain an effective and continuously improving program.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE ST. JUDE ABE PROGRAM?

Hopefully, and with each of our efforts, this program will expand and improve. Continued research will indicate areas for refinement and improvement. The program may be expanded to include courses in legal rights, consumer education, health care, business law, and financial budgeting. The areas of vocational training, continuing

education, and job counseling and placement also need development.

The best way to learn more about this program is to become involved. Again, we welcome your interest in this volunteer tutoring program and welcome aboard!